

Mary E. Fortier

Milton VT 05468

November 2, 2013

The Honorable Judge Christina Reiss
Chief Judge
United States District Court
11 Elmwood Avenue
Burlington VT 05401

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF VERMONT
FILED

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BY PC
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5:13-cr-32-1

The Honorable Judge Reiss:

I am writing today to show my support for my father in law Jim Fortier. I meet Jim about 9 or 10 years ago. He welcomed me into the Fortier family with open arms. After a few years of marriage we welcomed our first daughter into our family and she became the greatest gift we could have given Jim. Two years later we were blessed with our second daughter. Jim jumped into his Grandpa role and became "Papa Jim". I feel his granddaughters have given him a chance to reconnect with his son, Ian and form a relationship with me.

Jim has joined my family for Thanksgiving at our house, Christmas, the girl's birthdays and just because. He is the first one to volunteer (and mean it) to help me when my husband is on a military deployment. He has shown the girls how to fly a kite, drawn with them on the driveway with chalk and watched them play for hours. He even went and bought his fishing license in hopes to go fishing with them and Ian.

I have learned from stories that he has told and from his friends he was very dedicated to his career in the military and I know first-hand that he showed that same work ethic to his job with the Burlington Free Press. He taught that value to both his sons.

Almost a year ago when we received the call that Jim had been arrested left my husband and I in shock. We had just shared our Christmas with him in early January (delayed due to my husband military deployment). Just prior to celebrating Christmas, our girls spent a Saturday afternoon with him and Craig, so I could have a few hours to myself. When I returned I made them dinner and took the girls home. His behavior was just as I expected. He also checked in with me several times to make sure I was doing well during Ian's deployment.

As parents, my husband and I had to put our Children first, ask questions to make sure the relationship our girls had with their grandparent had been what it appeared.

Since his arrest he has shown remorse for his actions. He accepts responsibility for his actions and what his choices cost him. He has abided by the terms set by the court to not talk to or see

his granddaughters, which I believe is heartbreaking for him. He has not been on a computer. I know he will not allow himself to use bad judgment again.

I have been very fortunate to have large family. My grandparents are still alive and part of my life and my children's life. My wish for my children is to have a relationship with all their grandparents and great grandparents. I am unsure of what that relationship with Papa Jim will be going forward or what the holidays will bring due to the outcome of what happens in the court room. I respect the court's decision and I believe Jim does too.

Thank you in advance for your time to read this letter.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary E. Fortier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mary E. Fortier

5:13-cr-32

James Fortier is my father-in-law.

In the time I've known Jim, he has been quiet and a lonely man. In the last year he has opened up and has become more involved. He is trustworthy and caring, that has not changed.

Since Jim's arrest he has become more open and friendly. He stops by our house and we've learned more about the fortier side of the family. I am very happy that I've been able to learn more about my father in law and we are able to build a good relationship. We used to have to go to his house to see him but since the arrest Jim will come to our house to visit and help my husband.
~~Jim~~

Before Jim's arrest he worked off hours delivering newspapers very, very early so he didn't visit us and rarely called. Now he calls frequently and visits because he no longer ~~visits~~ works.

I feel that this would not happen again. He seems very happy now without computer connectivity.